

*try this in your group? Spend just a couple of minutes in silence, letting God speak to you in a gentle whisper. After the silence, share what came to your mind. Maybe a name or idea that you can compare with what others heard. There are no wrong answers, and it may take time to develop your ear to hear God's whisper. Maybe God has been whispering, and you just need to recognize His voice. Be discerning, God won't contradict His Word so weigh it against scripture first.*

### 3. Reading

*Psalm 119:105 NLT - 105 Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.*

One of the best ways to hear from God is through His Word. It is a gift that comes to life when we expect God to speak to us through it. Make reading a passage of scripture a part of your daily time with God. As you read, be sure to pause and reflect on what God says to you through His Word.

*There are many resources you can use – Jesus Calling, Daily Bread, One-Year Bible, You Version Devotionals, Lectio 365. The list is endless. What is your favorite way to read God's word each day?*

### WRAP-UP

God has promised to guide, advise, and watch over our lives. Sometimes He speaks to us when we least expect it, but we can and should make room in our schedule to encounter Him every day, through prayer and reading of His Word, so that we align our lives with His will. God wants to speak to us, and we need to be listening.

### MEMORY VERSE.

*"Be still, and know that I am God! ..."*

*-Psalm 46:10a NLT*

**PRAYER (20 MIN)** Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life.

*Challenge - If you don't already have a daily time to spend with God, start one this week. Expect to hear his guidance as you pray, listen and reflect on the Bible.*

## **"How God has been Moving"**

**October 2, 2022**

### INTRODUCTION

This week we welcomed back Pastor David from Officer Training School. While his time away was filled with physical, academic and leadership training, it was also a unique environment to encounter God and hear what He had to say. Sometimes when we break our routine, and put ourselves in an unusual circumstance, God has an opportunity to speak to us in fresh ways. But we should always be listening for God to speak to us. In this study, let's consider how we can give God an opportunity to speak to us every day by observing regular simple spiritual practices of prayer and reading.

### Ice Breaker

*In what unusual places or in what unusual ways has God spoken to you in the past?*

### Key Passage

*Psalm 32:8 NLT - 8 The LORD says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.*

### STUDY QUESTIONS

#### 1. Regular Encounters

*Psalm 46:10a NLT - 10 "Be still, and know that I am God! ..."*

Let's be honest, it is very easy for our days to be filled with so many things that we neglect taking time for God. But when we don't spend time with God, we can easily find the course of our lives veering off

track. If we want to know God's plans for us, and follow them, then we need to be making a regular time to encounter Him each day.

*Spending time with God can be a natural part of the rhythm of your day. For some, it is first thing when they wake up, for others the last before they go to sleep. Maybe it is when you pause mid-day for lunch. If you already have a time set aside, when is it, and if you don't, what time would work best to set aside as your time with God?*

*Mark 1:35 NLT - 35 Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray.*

*Matthew 6:6 NLT - 6 But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.*

Regular encounters with God are best when you can focus your attention on God alone. To do that you need to find a place without distractions, a quiet place.

*Where did Jesus go to pray in Mark 1:35? Before he gave the disciples the pattern of the Lord's Prayer, Jesus gave them directions on selecting the place they should pray. How was it described? An isolated place, or "prayer closet" will help you to eliminate distractions during your time with God. It might be a chair in the den or a beach where you walk, but the idea is to be present with God, minimizing distractions. Where is that quiet place in your life where you can regularly spend time in God's presence?*

When distractions come, and they will come, don't try to ignore them. Name them, address them, dismiss them, and then return your full attention to God.

## **2. Prayer**

Now that you have identified the place and time to meet with God, let's consider how you will spend your time together. It may seem obvious, but prayer is our means of communicating with God. So, what is included in our prayers? They are not just a list of requests. They are also not a one-way conversation. Let's reconsider how we view prayer.

*Psalm 32:8 NLT - 8 The LORD says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.*

*Luke 11:2-4 NLT - 2 Jesus said, "This is how you should pray: "Father, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. 3 Give us each day the food we need, 4 and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And don't let us yield to temptation.*

*In Psalm 32 God has promised to guide us along life's path, to advise us and watch over us. Isn't that what we all want and need? So, we can come confidently to Him seeking exactly that. How do you see the Lord's prayer as our seeking God's guidance in our life? What do we mean when we pray "Your kingdom come" as it applies to decisions we make every day? We don't have to use these exact words, but during our time with God, we should seek to align our actions with God's will, rather than seeking to have God's actions line up with our will. There is a place to make your needs know, but God's will trumps ours every time.*

Prayer is only a beginning point in our encounters with God. We are asking for and expecting God's guidance in life, so we need to listen for His response. Many of us get to the end of our part of prayer, say "Amen", and exit without giving God an opportunity to respond. But how do we hear God's response?

*1 Kings 19:11-13 NLT - 11 "Go out and stand before me on the mountain," the LORD told him. And as Elijah stood there, the LORD passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. 12 And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. 13 When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And a voice said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"*

*In his encounter with God, Elijah had to look beyond the spectacular signs to find God's response in the gentle whisper. So in your time with God, you may need to sit quietly, expectantly and let God speak to you in a gentle whisper. If you haven't done this before, it may feel uncomfortable at first, but God can bring something to mind as an unexpected thought or suggestion, in a gentle whisper. Are you ready to*